HUGH FEARNLEY-WHITTINGSTALL VISITS NORTH DEVON AONB STAND AT CLOVELLY HERRING FESTIVAL

Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, of TV's River Cottage fame, broke off from filming a programme at the recent Clovelly Herring Festival to visit the North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty stand and wish the Partnership a very 'happy 50th anniversary'.

He was so impressed with the hand-crafted 'herrings' made by youngsters at the stand, that he borrowed a couple to adorn his on-site film set. Over 55 children took part in the AONB's free craft workshops to create 'herrings' from re-cycled materials, which they could decorate and take home. Hugh was also delighted to receive his own personal copy of the new AONB celebratory brochure.

Also on the stand with Hugh was the AONB Chairman, Rose Day who said: **"**Clovelly is one of the jewels of the North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and we are most grateful to the Clovelly Estates for inviting us to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the North Devon AONB at their Herring Festival last Sunday. The infectious enthusiasm of children and their parents decorating willow herrings with recycled and natural materials; the support and interest of the local community; the smell of kippers smoking and herrings cooking; the sight of traditional herring boats in the harbour and the sound of sea shanties all contributed to a wonderful celebration of this traditional North Devon coastal fishery."

Clovelly Herring Festival, which took place on Sunday 15 November, attracted a great crowd including both the local community and out of season visitors to the area during an off peak period. It celebrated the great-tasting, but underrated *Silver Darlings* of the sea with the aim of raising awareness of dwindling fish stocks and supporting fishing by sustainable methods. The festival was also one of a series of events highlighting the different aspects of life, culture, history and wildlife within the North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to mark its 50th anniversary. Details about the North Devon Coast AONB and its anniversary programme can be found on www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk.

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